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THE SECRET OF KANT.[1]

BY GORDON CLARK.

Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" was given to the world in 1781. At the end of a hundred and twelve years it may seem rather late to talk about Kant's "secret," as if the real outcome of his great book has not yet been adequately grasped and absorbed by the human mind. Such, however, is precisely the claim here made, and to show the fact is the aim of the present article.

To waste no words in coming to the point, the secret of Kant is the

ANALYSIS OF PERCEPTION.

By this analysis of perception Kant also analyzed, once and for good,

MIND AND MATTER, TIME AND SPACE.

So "the secret of Kant" is pretty nearly the secret of the universe.

But, in the haste to ride general results, the one vital affair in the "Critique of Pure Reason" was impatiently skipped over, even in Germany, and is not yet truly seen to have been established, although without Kant's analysis of perception the post-Kantian philosophy of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel would go as well for nothing as one of Rip Van Winkle's drinks. In England, not longer ago than the latest edition of Mr. George Henry Lewes's "Biographical History of Philosophy," we were directly told, in the most innocent way, that Kant, had never analyzed perception at all.

> "He does not trouble himself" [said Mr. Lewes] "with investigating the nature of perception; he contents himself with the fact that we have sensations, and with the fact that we have ideas whose origin is not sensuous."[2]

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[1] As this bit of writing is designed to effect a purpose, not to display erudition, and is partly at least for good readers who may not know German, the quotations from Kant are all taken from his "Critique of Pure Reason," as translated by J. M. D. Meiklejohn (Bohn's Philosophical Library, edition of 1860).

[2] Lewes's Biog. History of Philosophy: Kant, § 3, ¶ 7.

Such a statement as this reminds one of the description of "the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out." If that funny muddle, "the history of philosophy," had dealt with Shakespeare, perhaps we should have been informed that Hamlet was never, in any circumstances, a part of the piece.

But even the capital offence of Mr. Lewes, as a critic of philosophy, is hardly so bad as a conclusion lately reached by a philosophical writer in America, that Kant's work was substantially a local German affair, which the rest of the world has now outgrown. Our great and good American soldier, General Hancock, made no such misfire as this when he counted our national tariff another "local affair," of some interest indeed to certain States and sections. The truth is that the world has just begun its work with Kant, and that Kant himself, from the psychological standpoint, was the full result of everything that had preceded him—in Greece, in France, in Britain, and in his own country. The use he made of Aristotle, of Descartes and Locke, of Leibnitz, Berkeley, and Hume, leaves no doubt whatever, in this respect, when Kant has once been read with any real understanding of him.

First of all, be it said, Kant, both as *savant* and philosopher, had utterly absorbed the information and the conclusions of what may be called

"SCIENTIFIC IDEALISM."[1]

This idealism had been chiefly developed by solid, materialistic Britons, though Hobbes and Descartes laid it down at nearly the same time. It is merely the knowledge which any one may now get from his first lessons in optics, that things of matter—the objects of our five senses—are constituted such through the structure and action of these senses themselves. That is to say, material things—whatever we see or feel, hear, taste or smell—while existent and real—while exactly what everybody takes them to be—are *made so* through a principle of

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[1] Hair-splitters can easily play their part here, with some spectacular effect. Kant explicitly repudiated idealism of several sorts, and regarded his own idealism as realism—a conclusion, too, in which he was perfectly right. Phenomena are real—are sensuous objects, material things, in the full extent to which matter can exist. But what are "material things" *made of?* That is the question. According to Kant, every one of them is a compound of three elemental factors: *First*, the principle of "mind," as active "synthetical unity"; *Second*, the principle of "sense," as passive "susceptibility"; *Third*, the principle of the ultimate non-ego—the objective *background* of matter, the "noumenon," or, plurally speaking, "things in themselves." The impingement of some "noumenon" on "sense"—the composite relation of these *two*—is *constructed a relation* by the synthesis of mind in its phase which Kant termed "apprehension." It was known and proved before Kant that matter is always a relation between its objective background and subjective sense—a relation in which the background is transformed into the matter itself. *This* idealism is what I term "scientific," because it is not confined to philosophers, but is held by scientists as well, so far as

RELATIVITY.

Or, as Kant put it, every "phenomenon" is a "*re*-presentation"—that is, some lot of effects on our sensuous nature, bound together into a unity of them, the unity thus formed becoming an object of apprehension—a percept. Scientific idealism, of course, does not question for a moment the given duality of the cosmos, which appears to us as what we call "mind and matter." Here are *we*; out there, indubitably apart from us, are other things, involving another source. But scientific idealism has found that this source is itself quite other than the things we connect with it, and can properly be described in this connection only as

"SOURCE OF IMPACT."

It has nothing to do with "matter" in the common (and *proper*) acceptation. It enters *into* matter, as the ultimate non-ego, the objective background, of every phenomenon. But in all material things the background is *transformed* by contact with subjective sense (in us or other organisms), and "matter" is really the fusion, the compound, the third term, of these two elemental principles.

This truth appears to have been reached well enough, even in the old tenet of India, that "matter is illusion." In Greece, Carneades is said to have understood it in something like our own inductive way. But in the manner of "modern science" it was first clearly seen and stated by

THOMAS HOBBES.

"Qualities called sensible" [said he] "are, in the object that causeth them, but so many several motions of the matter by which it presseth

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they have generalized their facts. It was this idealism that Kant took for granted. But the relation between subjective sense and the ultimate non-ego he *centered with mind*—showing that sense always *contains* mind, though the mind of sense is the awareness of instinct.

our organs diversely.[1] . . . Because the image in vision, consisting of color and shape, is the knowledge we have of the qualities of the object of that sense, it is no hard matter for a man to fall into this opinion, that the same color and shape are the very qualities themselves."

But, concluded Hobbes:

> "The subject wherein color and image are inherent is not the object or thing seen. . . . There is nothing without us (really) which we call an image or color. . . . The said image or color is but an apparition unto us of *the motion, agitation, or alteration, which the object worketh in the brain, or spirits, or some internal substance of the head.* . . . As in vision, so also in conceptions that arise from the other senses, the subject of their inference is not the object, but the sentient."

The investigations of

DESCARTES

led him to announce the principle thus:

> "Nothing passes from external objects to the soul except certain motions of matter (*mouvemens corporels*). . . . The ideas of pain, of colors, of sounds, and of all similar things must be innate, in order that the mind may represent them to itself, on the occasion of certain motions of matter *with which they have no resemblance.*"[2]

When

LOCKE

began his "Essay," and posited mind in its first estate as a passive nonentity—a "blank tablet"—he had no vital conception, it would seem, of scientific idealism. But, in the patient thinking of twenty years, such a man could not fail to come upon the law; hence his "secondary qualities" of objects, which he affirmed to be "nothing in the *objects themselves* but powers to produce various sensations in *us*," though he considered certain "primary qualities"—bulk, extension, figure, motion, rest, number—to inhere actually in "bodies," without relation to minds or senses.

But it was seen quickly enough that Hobbes and Descartes had been right in making no such distinction as Locke assumed, between the "primary" and the "secondary" qualities of phenomena. The first are simply *invariable* qualities; the second, *variable.* "Primary" qualities present themselves with objects in general; "secondary" qualities, with certain objects and not with others. But invariability may exist in a principle of relation quite as well, to say the least, as in any ultimate objectivity. Besides, the "primary qualities of bodies" are, in one crucial aspect, anything *but* "primary," as not being immediate, but only inferential. We experience no single object of matter, for instance, without instinctively experiencing some degree of "bulk," or "solidity"; but that *all* material objects possess "bulk" is a conclusion that transcends experience, and is reached only by referring various experiences to *mind.* It is not a perception at all, but a *conception*--an *inference* of relating things to thought. As a general principle, then—a category—the very birth of it depends on this relation.

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[1] "Leviathan," John Bohn, 1839, p. 2. "Human Nature," John Bohn, 1839, p. 4.

[2] This translated excerpt is taken from Prof. Huxley's "Hume," 1890, p. 84.

It was very easy for so acute a man as

BISHOP BERKELEY

to place Locke's primary qualities of matter where they belong, and to show that nothing in the universe has any actual being, apart from a universal element that, wherever it may be posited, can alone be called subjectivity.

HUME'S IDEALISM

is most completely illustrated in a quotation made prominent by Prof. Huxley:[1]

> "'Tis not our body we perceive when we regard our limbs and members, but certain impressions which enter by the senses; so that the ascribing a real and corporeal existence to these impressions, or to their objects, is an act of the mind difficult to explain."

Since Berkeley and Hume no philosophical thinker, perhaps, of any significance, anywhere in the world, has questioned the "ideality" of "material things." Even Reid, as the philosopher of "common sense," declared that

> "No man can conceive any sensation to resemble any known quality of bodies. Nor can any man show, by any good argument, that all our

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[1] Huxley's "Hume," p. 80.

sensations might not have been as they are, though no body, nor quality of body, had ever existed."

The idealism of the

RECENT MATERIALISTIC PHILOSOPHERS—

such, say, as Mr. Lewes, Herbert Spencer, and the "Positivists" —has been most comprehensively expressed by John Stuart Mill, in his statement that "Matter is a Permanent Possibility of Sensation."

> "If" [said Mr. Mill] "I am asked whether I believe in matter, I ask whether the questioner accepts this definition of it. If he does, I believe in matter; and so do all Berkeleians. In any other sense than this I do not."

Now there is no such thing as comprehending Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason"—there is no use of touching it at all—until one sees that Kant founded himself, utterly and literally, in scientific idealism. He took it wholly for granted before he ever inked a quill to begin his great work. It is a pity he neglected to say so, in his very first sentence. Still, he was clear and specific enough when it so happened that he got ready. At the close of his "Transcendental Æsthetic," under the head of "General Remarks," he set out with this unmistakable declaration:

> "In order to prevent any misunderstanding, it will be requisite, in the first place, to recapitulate, as clearly as possible, what our opinion is with respect to *the fundamental nature of our sensuous cognition in general.* We have intended, then, to say that all our intuition is nothing but the re-presentation of phenomena; that the things which we intuite are not in themselves the same as our re-presentations of them in intuition, nor are their relations so constituted as they appear to us; and that *if we take away the subject, or even only the subjective constitution of our senses in general*, then *not only the nature and relations of objects* in space and time, *but even space and time themselves disappear.* . . . What may be the nature of objects considered as things in themselves, and without reference to the receptivity of our sensibility, is quite unknown to us. We know nothing more than our own mode of perceiving them, which is peculiar to us, and which, though not of necessity pertaining to every animated being, is so to the whole human race. With this alone we have to do."[1]

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[1] "Critique," p. 35.

This one excerpt from Kant tells in itself the whole story of his fundamental idealism. But repeated proof can easily be had, if wanted. He closes his dissection of space, for instance, thus:

> "Objects are quite unknown to us in themselves, and *what we call outward objects* are nothing else but mere *re-presentations of our sensibility,* whose form is space, but whose real correlate, the thing in itself, is not known by means of these representations, nor ever can be, but respecting which, in experience, no inquiry is ever made."

Once more:

> "The faculty of sensibility not only does not present us with any indistinct and confused cognition of objects as things in themselves, but, in fact, gives us *no knowledge of these at all.* On the contrary, as soon as we abstract in thought *our own subjective nature,* the object re-presented, with the properties ascribed to it by sensuous intuition, *entirely disappears, because it was only this subjective nature that determined the form of the object as a phenomenon.*"[1]

The principle of scientific idealism being once comprehended and accepted, and the fact being plain that Kant took it as fully established more than a century ago, there is really not much further difficulty with his whole industry, except in its maddening order and exhausting prolixity.

THE "CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON" PROPERLY BEGINS at the end of its first fifty thousand words or so, with what Kant designated as his "Transcendental Deduction of the Pure Conceptions of the Understanding," and with the section in which he treats "The Possibility of a Conjunction of the Manifold Representations given by Sense." He says:

> "The manifold content in our re-presentations can be given in an intuition which is merely sensuous—in other words, is nothing but susceptibility; and the form of this intuition can exist *a priori* in our faculty of representation, without being anything else but the mode in which the subject is affected. But the conjunction (*conjunctio*) of a manifold in intuition never can be given by the senses; it cannot therefore be contained in the pure form of sensuous intuition, for it is a spontaneous act of the faculty of representation. And as we must, to distinguish it from sensi-

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[1] "Critique," p. 37.

bility, entitle this faculty *understanding*, so all conjunction, whether conscious or unconscious, be it of the manifold in intuition, sensuous or nonsensuous, or of several conceptions, is an act of the understanding. To this act we shall give the general appellation of *synthesis*, thereby to indicate, at the same time, that *we cannot represent anything as conjoined in the object without having previously conjoined it ourselves.*"

It is hardly too much to say that the whole secret, with pretty nearly the whole substance of Kant, is packed in those few words. They declare simply that, without an ultimate, *a priori* principle, to be entitled "*understanding*," there can be no possibility of existence for any objective thing, whether material phenomenon or mental conception. They declare that, without

THE UNITY OF A SUBJECTIVE ELEMENT

in the universe, there can be no objective unit whatever—no space, no time, no monad, either perceptible or thinkable. And such is the case if scientific idealism be true. Let us see:

The "manifold content" of an "intuition" may be merely "sensuous": that is to say, the various properties of the intuition called a stone—take the stone that Dr. Johnson kicked to disprove idealism—are "effects on the senses." The color, the texture, the weight, the size—every one of all such "material" attributes—exist, as they are, solely by relation to *me*, or to some other being in whom is organized the element of "sense." Matter is *made* of impact—impact between its objective background ("the noumenon" or "noumena") and some sort or degree of subjectivity. Without these two terms, their product of interaction, their third term, matter, is *not*. So "the manifold content" of a "re-presentation"—or, what is the same thing, the properties of a material object—are "nothing but susceptibility"—effects on sense. By

"THE FORM OF INTUITION"

Kant meant, as he repeatedly explained, the *plural quality* of space and time. Space is made of *spaces;* time of *times;* and the plural contents (always such) of matter can only exist under the plural contents of space and time—that is, in sections of space and sequences of time, these sections and sequences being the intrinsic character, the divisible quality, the essential "form" of space and time as total units or completed things.

"But," says Kant, "*all conjunction*" is "an act of the understanding," and "can not be contained in the pure form of sensuous intuition," by which he means that time could never be a conjunct of times, space a conjunct of spaces, nor a stone the conjunct of its properties—each a "synthesis" of a "manifold content"—unless made so by the synthetical unity of *a priori* mind.

In our quotation Kant attributes "*unconscious*" action to the "*understanding*"—the unconscious action of "conjunction" or "synthesis." His phrase has been a perpetual stumbling-block to his critics, but he meant exactly what he said. Unconscious mental synthesis is what he afterward designated as

"THE SYNTHESIS OF APPREHENSION,"

as distinguished from

"THE SYNTHESIS OF APPERCEPTION,"

when he said:

> "I premise that by the term *synthesis of apprehension* I understand the combination of the manifold in an empirical intuition, whereby perception, that is, empirical consciousness of the intuition (as phenomenon), is possible." [1]

In illustrating the category of quantity, Kant talks of "making the empirical intuition of a house into a perception, by apprehension of the manifold contained therein," and says that "the *necessary unity of space* and of my *external sensuous intuition* lies at the foundation of this act." [2] Here is suggested the whole dissection of phenomena, the whole analysis of perception, but, unfortunately, without details, a few of which, at this point, would have made the whole basis of his work perfectly clear. The "manifold" contained in an "empirical intuition"—take the stone we have used for an example—is simply the diversity of "properties," constituting the object—the color, texture, size, weight, and the rest of them; and these properties are "effects of sense." Every one of them is a relation to subjectivity, a result of impact *on* subjectivity, and is in the *object* only as reflecting or *re*-presenting there the sensuous nature of a *subject*. But these various " effects on various senses," these merely subjective separates—how do they *get united* into *one thing?* What constitutes the unity of sensuous manifolds? Every phenomenon being an essential plurality—a lot of "sense-effects"—what closes together the various effects on various human senses, called the properties of a stone, into the one phenomenal object, the stone itself? To this end there must be some common subjective ground of those subjective things, "effects on sense." There must be some subjective unity in which those subjective pluralities all merge, for only as *merged* do they get to be an *object*. Now, a common subjective ground of various effects on various senses can only be a common *awareness* of them—a

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[1] "Critique," p. 98.

[2] "Critique," p. 99.

"SYNTHETICAL UNITY OF APPREHENSION,"

or just instinctive, automatic consciousness in the germ. This must be common to all the senses together, and to each sense separately. What, for example, is seeing, but the simple awareness of sight? What is touch, but the simple awareness of feeling? What is any "intuition," which means any taking-in of any phenomenon, but a common awareness, however rudimental or developed, of some conjoined diversity of effects on sense?

And it must be added here, as vital to the full comprehension of Kant, that not only every material object, like our example, the stone, is made of essential plurality of sense-effects, but that

EVERY SEPARATE PROPERTY

of an object is also made of like plurality. No object, and no property of an object, is, or can be, single, unal, or, in other words, any *thing*, until constructed so, in sense, by the "unconscious understanding" thereof—the synthetical unity of instinctive, automatic "apprehension." To realize this fact, it is only necessary to remember that every property of anything, say the hardness of a stone, is a compound relation between the impact of some ultimate non-ego on the sense of touch, and the peculiar nature of the sense itself: so the property of hardness must contain *essential diversity*, something from each of *two fundamental sources*. As Aristotle, from his ontological investigations, found that matter, if regarded as an absolute independence—an unrelated thing in itself—is *no thing*, but only chaotic indeterminateness—formless "potentiality"—so Kant, from his psychological inquiry—his dissection of phenomena as existent through perception—found the same truth in a deeper significance. The

ENTIRE PRINCIPLE OF UNITY,

whether in a feeling, a thought, a material object, or the universe as a whole, can alone exist through

THE PRINCIPLE OF MIND.

This is the very bottom of the secret of Kant.

But we have seen that mind, in its lowest state, is what Kant, "to distinguish it from sensibility," entitled "unconscious understanding." There used to be an old saw in philosophy—still, indeed, at work—to the effect that "there is nothing in the mind that was not first in sense." Leibnitz, adding a piece to the saw, said: "Except mind itself." Leibnitz affirmed, that is, that sense always *contains* mind—that mind is *in* sense as a component of it, and that without mind there is no sense at all. What Leibnitz perceived and asserted, Kant *proved* by "observation and induction"—by analyzing phenomena under the law of scientific idealism.

MIND IN SENSE

—the mind of sense—is just automatic, animal awareness, just simple

"APPREHENSION,"

undeveloped, and in the lowest animal life not to be developed, into

"APPERCEPTION,"

the "*conscious*" stage of "understanding," capable of forming a *concept*.

Well, in the genesis of a stone, or other material object, certain effects on sense are merged in the unit they compose, by reception into the "synthetical unity of apprehension." The stone is *created* in this way. Its own objective unity—its wholeness, or "*form*" as a stone—is thus the derivation, the manufactured product, of

SUBJECTIVITY, AS A COSMIC ELEMENT,

an element *a priori* to the existence of any possible phenomenon. The stone, however, *is* objective—is just the palpable thing that everybody takes it to be, out there in space. This is a given *fact of perception*—something, as Kant said, "never questioned in experience." As such *fact*, how can it be accounted for, when we know, at the same time, that the stone is nothing but a plexus of subjective states? How does the bunch of *internal impressions* get *externalized?* What is the cause of this reflex, this "*re*-presentation"? It must be something inherent in the principle of *apprehension itself*, or the plexus of impressions would necessarily stay within us. Being wrought internally, it would remain internal. Hence, this "apprehension"—this element of instinctive synthetical awareness—must be in its nature a *double*—an entity which reproduces, or throws out before itself, whatever lot of sense-effects it receptively synthesizes, or binds together in a sheaf, known as some object. But all this, summed up, means only that mind, even in its lowest form of "unconscious understanding"—the simple automatic apprehension which shuts together certain effects on sense into a totality of them—must, *as being apprehension*, necessarily, though instinctively, apprehend its own product. Here is the full explanation of the amusing, iron-clad conception of Hobbes, that an "image," or a "color," is but an apparition unto us of "motion, agitation, or alteration" in some "internal substance of the head."

THE SELF-REFLEXIVENESS OF APPREHENSION,

in the manufacture of phenomena, was named by Kant

"THE TRANSCENDENTAL SYNTHESIS OF IMAGINATION,"

the word "imagination" standing on its roots, and meaning *the image-making faculty*. Phenomena, as reflex-conjuncts of sense-effects, are "produced"—put out—by this second function of apprehension; so Kant said he sometimes called it "productive imagination." It is that function of pure elemental, or *a priori* awareness, which "*re*-presents" itself in the constitution of every object, as its *unity*, but a unity *shaped* according to some object's filling of sense-effects. Hence Kant says:

"This synthesis of the manifold of sensuous intuition, which is possible and necessary *a priori*, may be called figurative synthesis (*synthesis speciosa*)."

Thus Kant found mind in sense, "unconscious understanding," the instinctive awareness of animal susceptibility, as it existed in himself, to be the literal objective basis of all phenomena—the first "material" unity of every "material thing." And he found this elemental source of all unity to be an innate

SELF-ACTIVITY

—a self-seeing mirror, as it were—a double of receptiveness and reflectiveness. Here, at last, was the *actual*, *living thing*, of which Locke's "blank-tablet" had long been the still-born, stone figure.

Mr. Herbert Spencer, in his remarkable investigation of "The Principles of Psychology," posits "mind" as always implied in sentiency, and as necessary to the genesis of any phenomenon, even the "first nervous shock" of a sensitive being. Recognizing the law of scientific idealism, he has seen, too, that our objective world is made up, at the perceptional outset, of such shocks. Again, he has proved, with great detail, that the action of mind is always of one general nature, whether in the lowest animal instinct or the highest conscious reason. But back at the first nervous shock, Mr. Spencer *stops* with mind, and says that at the next regress it becomes "unknowable." Yet nearly a hundred years before this investigation Kant showed precisely what this so-called "unknowable" *is*. He showed that mind, in all stages and states—

MIND IN ITSELF

—is a synthetical unity of awareness. In germ, as "unconscious understanding"—as the mind of sense—its function is to be simply apprehensive of, and thus to conjoin in its instinctive cognizance, some "manifold" contained in a "nervous shock," or in various sense-effects, into some *unity;* which then, as *itself apprehended*, or *made a reflex*, becomes an impression, an image, an object.

Such is the base of Kant's analysis of perception, and so of matter as always nothing but a relation to sense. At the beginning of his work, however, he confined his attention to and in such a way as to confound his readers from that day to this. Still, at the opening of his "Æsthetic," he implies, if only in one remark, all that has been explained here:

> "If I take" [says Kant] "from our representation of a body, all that the understanding thinks as belonging to it, as substance, force, divisibility, and also whatever belongs to sensation, as impenetrability, hardness, color, there is still something left us from this empirical intuition, namely, *extension and shape.* These belong to pure intuition, which exists *a priori* in the mind, as a mere form of sensibility, and without any real object of the senses or any sensation."

Students of Kant, in general, know well enough why he attributes "extension" to "bodies," as derived by them from *a priori* mind. *Space* is so derived; hence all things *in* space, which is the "form," the "condition" of their existence, must partake of its nature, which is pure extension, pure "given quantity," as he designates it. But why does the *shape* of a material body belong to "pure intuition," and *come from mind?* Simply because the shape (let it be of a stone) is merely the *objected* "*synthesis of apprehension*," in which the properties of the stone, as impressions of sense, are *unified*, but in accordance with their special variety. The shape is their "figurative synthesis," their "*synthesis speciosa*." Now, in the meaning of Kant, and in the nature of the case, space is *made* in precisely the same *manner* as a stone; only the stone is full of diverse properties—special effects on sense, got from some impinging background of matter—some "noumenon"—while space has no properties at all, except additions and divisions of *itself*—spaces. In other words, the stone is a *special* relation between mental synthesis and sensuous susceptibility, the latter being in particular impact with some noumenal non-ego, and being definitely *filled* from it. Space, on the other hand, is a *general* relation between the same mental synthesis and the same sensuous susceptibility, the latter holding *no contents* from any noumenon, yet being recipient to *all* possibility of noumenal impact. Hence, space is just "the synthesis of apprehension" itself, set in self-reflex, objected, phenomenated. The stone, in its unity, its form, its "shape," is this objected synthesis of apprehension, *filled* with certain sensuous effects. The synthesis of apprehension, again, as the condition of any special "shape" into which it may be stuffed, is of course *a priori* to the stuffed shape; so space is *a priori* to the stone in space. Once again, space is the outward re-presentation, the very double to the eye, of the synthesis of apprehension; for space is just the

VISIBLE SYNTHESIS OF THE APPREHENDED

—the transparent base of coexistence for all external things.

It must be remembered that the synthesis of apprehension, as the "mind" of "sense," is itself a *double*, containing the pure conjunctive unity of "unconscious understanding" as an active factor, and susceptibility to impact as a passive factor. In the conjoined relation of these two factors every material phenomenon gets to exist; so there must be *some* relation of space to *every* external object, and to *all* external objects—which is to say at once that space is *infinite*, both in extent and divisibility, so far as it can apply to objects *at all.*

And here, too, is the reason that the contained character, the constituent quality, of space—meaning what Kant termed the "form of the intuition"—is essentially plural. This constituent quality of space is a *re*-presentation of mind, as at once active and passive, receptive and reflexive—as fundamental *a priori* self-separateness. But *space itself*, as a *whole*, is the *synthesis* of this self-separateness. It is self-unity of self-separateness, *materialized.* Space, made of spaces, is a thing identical in form and contents. Kant said:

> "Space *re*-presented as an *object* (as geometry really requires it to be) contains more than the mere *form of the intuition;* namely, a combination of the manifold given according to the form of sensibility into a representation that can be intuited; so the *form of the intuition* gives us merely the manifold, but the *formal intuition* gives unity of re-presentation. In the "Æsthetic" I regarded this unity as belonging entirely to sensibility, for the purpose of indicating that it antecedes all conceptions, although it presupposes a synthesis which does not belong to sense, through which, however, all our conceptions of space and time are possible. . . . By means of this unity alone (the understanding determining the sensibility) space and time are given as intuitions."

It is strange that Kant did not put this explanation, with the rest like it, at the beginning of his "Critique," where it belonged, instead of burying it piecemeal in his "Transcendental Logic,"[1] where its vast significance has, to this day, been as good at lost.

It is easy enough to follow out Kant's

GENESIS OF TIME,

in the same way as his genesis of space. The constituent quality of space and time is the same in both, and is subject in both to the same act of synthesis, in order that the essential plurality of "the form of intuition" may be created into the unity of "the formal intuition" itself—the single thing, space or time. But time is the "form" of "*in*-ternal sense," as Kant put it, while space is the "form" of "*ex*-ternal sense"—sense being to Kant not its physical organs (which are matter), but mental *susceptibility* as distinguished from mental *synthesis*.[2] Every phenomenon in space and time is made of active subjective-synthesis, passive subjective-susceptibility, and noumenal impact. Space and time themselves are made of the synthesis and the susceptibility alone. But pure synthesis, which means just pure identity of awareness, can *have* no "susceptibility," cannot be *occupied*, without *change of state*; and any change of state in a pure general awareness forms succession of states, or, as Kant said, "*generates time*." But conjunction, again, of synthesis and susceptibility must be the relating of separates, with reference to the objective as well as the subjective factor. As objective effect this relation is pure co-existence of separates in the same time, through outness from each other—space. All objects, impressions, "effects of sense," must take the order of time; but "objects of internal sense" (certain feelings, or emotions), having no direct filling from noumena, are not objects in space.

As Kant was so largely a consequence of English psychology, it was natural he should take the peculiar method he did to prove the subjective origin of the objective percepts, space and time. Locke had pretty nearly convinced the thinking world that all knowledge comes from "experience," and is "limited" by it; and Hume had shown that this experience is a subjective record, good for information at any time, as far as it has gone, but excluding, by its very nature, all possibility of any universal and necessary truth. If all knowledge were really confined to experience, we could not say that one and one make two, but only that one and one *have made* two, up to date: to-morrow, one one and one *might* make three. Now, the reason that one and one make two, and *always must* make two, is simply that the human mind is a principle of awareness which receives impressions only by connecting them according to its *own unity.* There every record begins; thence every order proceeds; and number is the order imposed by consciousness on its receptions, or *experiences.* The statement that "one and one make two" is what Kant called "a synthetical judgment *a priori*," because the predicate of the judgment contains something more than the putting together of two experiences—all that is directly involved in the subject—and adds the implication of *universal and necessary order* in the conjunction. Scrutinizing space and time, Kant saw at once that, while *objective things*, these two objects are universal and necessary to perception—are its *a priori* vistas. But, if so, they could not be like the objects in them, contingent on some ultimate non-ego, but must be reflexes of *mind* in relation to sense. By taking this method of proof, Kant cornered Locke and Hume on their own ground; and, by showing that established sciences, like mathematics and physics, would be impossible under any "objective" derivation ot space and time, he rendered himself unanswerable. If he had explained his *idealism*, however, by dissecting any one phenomenon in space and time, his whole work would have been made clear, and would long ago have been understood.

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[1] To be found, in this instance, in a *note* on page 98 of the translation here followed.

[2] Kant's first point in his "Metaphysical Exposition of Space" is to declare "the external sense" a "property of the mind."

We have seen that the secret of Kant lies, first of all, in his phrase "the synthesis of apprehension," or "the transcendental synthesis of the image-making faculty."

> "It is an operation" [he says] "of the understanding on sensibility, and the *first* application of the understanding to objects of possible intuition, and at the same time *the basis for the exercise of the other functions of that faculty.*"[1]

But having duly emphasized this point, it must now be said that the synthesis of apprehension alone is altogether inadequate to give form to an

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[1] "Critique," p. 93.

OBJECT,

in the full import of that word. For an *object* is something held distinct by itself, in connection with another object, or with various objects. "*Unconscious* understanding" cannot form such connection and distinction, but can only blindly manufacture single intuitions, affording at most what Kant termed "a rhapsody of perceptions," in which no one would be first or last, or anything at all when past. A fish-worm, perhaps, has such a "rhapsody of perceptions" for its objective world. In the world of man the *a priori* element of intelligence which shapes it must be objected in the phase of

CONSCIOUSNESS PROPER,

or "apperception."

In noting the difference between the synthesis of apprehension and the synthesis of apperception, Kant said:

> "It is one and the same spontaneity which, at one time under the name of imagination, at another under that of understanding, produces conjunction in the manifold of intuition."[1]

Apperception is simply

MIND ADEQUATE TO CONCEPTION.

That there can be a stone, as known to a *human being*, there must be a synthesis of sense-effects (its properties), in which they are distinguished among themselves, and in which objects as wholes are distinguished from each other. A synthesis of this kind presupposes not merely "unconscious understanding," but an understanding that recognizes *itself* in connecting all things else.

> "I am conscious" [said Kant] "of my identical self in relation to all the variety of representations given to me in intuition, because I call all of them *my* representations. . . . The thought, 'These representations, given in intuition, belong all of them to me,' is just the same as 'I unite them in one self-consciousness.' . . . Synthetical unity of the manifold in intuition, as given *a priori*, is therefore the foundation of the identity of apperception itself, which antecedes *a priori* all determinate thought. But the conjunction of representations into a conception is not to be

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[1] P 99, note.

found in objects themselves, . . . but is, on the contrary, an operation of the understanding itself, which is nothing more than the faculty of conjoining *a priori*, and of bringing the variety of given representations under the unity of apperception. This principle is the highest in all human cognition."

So, to the existence of any distinguishable object there must pre-exist the element of mind in the phase of self-consciousness; and when Kant talked of

THE OBJECTIVE UNITY OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

he meant literally that "the synthetical unity of apperception," as well as "the synthetical unity of apprehension," is *materialized* in all *conceivable* things. To form the sense-effects of a stone into a single "intuition," they must be merged in a synthesis of apprehension; but to *set* the intuition as thus created—to make it remain *itself* in the midst of *others*, it must be merged with them in a higher synthesis—a common connective consciousness, which, distinguishing them in itself, re-presents them as distinguished.

It is here we reach Kant's famous

"CATEGORIES,"

which are simply conceptions of the pure synthetical unity of mind, as forming the unity of all things and of all connection among them.

The principle of mind, beginning, as we have seen, even with the instinctive mind of sense, is a spontaneous self-activity, receptive, reflexive, and resumptive of its doubles. By being the first, it unifies any and every manifold of sense-effects; by being the second, it *re*-presents the product—throws it *out;* by being the third, it apprehends the externalization, and a percept is born. Mind is thus essentially a *triad* as well as a *unit.* But if so, it is a

QUANTITY

—a sum of its own phases; and in these phases it is a *Unity*, a *Plurality*, and a *Totality.*

Mind, again, as just *a priori* principle and basis of all things, is manifestly their universal

QUALITY.

But, as self-reflexive, self-resumptive, it is at once a *Reality*, a *Negation*, and a *Limitation*, which means it is that which, in its double, contraposes one state to another, while, as a whole, it is the limit of both states.

It goes without saying that a principle of self-reflex is the

RELATION

of its reflexes, and in this relation is a *Substance* with *Dependence*, a *Cause* with *Effect*, and a *Reciprocity* of its separates. This short-cut to the Kantian categories[1] is certainly no sufficient "deduction" of them; for they are reflexes of conscious, not "unconscious" understanding; and the structure and action of instinctive mind would be nothing *known*, without the structure and action of conceptive mind. The synthesis of the latter proceeds, not through the formation of sense-effects into units of intuition, but through the formation of these already-made units (objects or their properties) into species, genera, and ultimate universals—the pure unity of these groupings, without regard to the things grouped, being just the pure *a priori* unity of self-conscious awareness.[2] Thus, those ultimate universals, the categories, are objective reproductions of pure conceptive synthesis, without which there could be no connection of things in *thought* —which would amount precisely to

NO REALIZED OBJECTS

and NO OBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE.

But that the categories are implicit in even the mind of sense, and that the first form of every phenomenon is the reflex form of this stage of mind, shows how literally the bases of thought are the *a priori* bases of all phenomena. Sir William Hamilton fancied that Aristotle's categories were "genera of real things," while Kant's categories were "determinations of thought," and, as mere "*entia rationis*," must "be excluded from the Aristotelic list." But there are no "genera of real things" except *as* "determinations of thought"; and, in making an experimental classification of objects, Aristotle found some of the Kantian categories, because the synthetical unity of mind had put those categories into the objects at the creation of them. To Kant an *object* meant something of which Sir William Hamilton had no boding.

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[1] Those of Modality are omitted, as not entering into the *constitution* of objects, but only reflecting the manner of their reception by mind in *accordance with* their constitution.

[2] As usual, Kant puts this exceedingly important part of his dissection of mind—and so of its objects—precisely where one finds the most difficulty in getting at it. He treats it exhaustively, however, under what is entitled "The Schematism of the Categories."

We can barely touch Kant's analysis of mind in its third phase —that of

REASON.

It is still the same principle of awareness, with the same function of synthesis; but, as reason, it does not apprehend or conceive: it concludes or comprehends. *Seeing* things, and then *thinking* them as such, it ends in asking, "*Why?*" The pure *form* of answer, apart from all contents, is "*because*"—on account of *cause*. Thus reason forms its synthesis of comprehension by referring the particular to the general for a cause—a process that can never stop short of including all things in ultimate unities of cause. It is evident that ultimate unities of cause must contain all subordinate causes or conditions under them. There can be just three such ultimate unities; for there are just three possible kinds of being and conditions that relate to their universals: subjective being and conditions to subjective unity of them; objective being and conditions to objective unity of them; and all being and conditions, both subjective and objective, to the universal unity of being and conditions. These final unities, again, *as* final—as totalities of conditions with none beyond—are themselves "unconditioned."

Reason, then, as an *a priori* synthetical unity, necessarily refers all conditions of things to their final or absolute unities, which are in reality nothing but conceptional reflexes of Reason's *own nature and action*. To *be* an identity of mind, for instance, to the conditions of subjectivity, reason must receive *them* into *its* unity, which thus becomes *their* totality. Now what is the objective re-presentation, the rational conception, of the totality of subjective conditions? It is simply the "transcendental idea" of pure subjectiveness, or Soul. In the same way the totality of objective, phenomenal conditions, is the idea of the Universe; while the totality of *all* conditions, both subjective and objective, is the idea of that in which all mind and all matter are related as their final cause or reason—God.

. . . .

The preceding sketch of Kant's great work, "The Critique of Pure Reason," is necessarily curtailed and imperfect. Still, I trust that his central thought—the one thought never out of his mind as the foundation of his philosophy—has been duly indicated. If so, his "secret" is open—a secret which lies in the fact that he saw through the principle of relativity, the law of scientific idealism, and relaid the whole structure from the corner-stone up. Before Kant it was known well enough that "matter," however we must all accept it with our hands and eyes, has no standing, under the analysis of thought, except as a system of effects on ourselves. Hume, we remember, saw all this so clearly that he pronounced the very organs of sense, "our limbs and members," to be "not our body," but "certain impressions" to which the mind ascribes "a corporeal existence." Our limbs and members certainly *are* our body—the only body we have—but Hume was right in his meaning that our body is a phenomenon which has no existence but as a plexus of impressions on a principle of intelligence, possessing various modes of reception, named senses. But this *principle* of *intelligence* itself was, to Hume, not a fact to be grasped by "reason," not a principle to be known and described, but was to be taken as a "force and vivacity" unknowable beyond an *instinct* of it. Hume's unknowable "force and vivacity"—an improved form of Locke's "blank-tablet"—Kant *analyzed* in the light of its products; namely, those conjuncts of sense-effects called intuitions; those conjuncts of intuitions called objects; those conjuncts of objects called species, genera, and categories; and finally those conjuncts of all things and all conditions of things, called transcendental ideas. Now, such conjuncts of various "manifolds" actually exist. They are man's percepts and concepts; they are his facts, his environment. But *as* percepts and concepts, and always conjuncts of "the manifold," they are formed, organized, totalized, through a *principle*—the principle of perception and conception itself. This is Kant's *a priori* synthetical unit, common and necessary to all "things" and to all "experience."

In our day the last word of any weight as against Kant—though not aimed at him in special—has been offered to us by that exceptionally able man,

PROFESSOR HUXLEY,

who is so apt to "hit the nail on the head," if there is any nail to hit. Too learned, both as philosopher and scientist, to question idealism, he admits it as unqualifiedly as did Mr. Mill; but he defends "what is commonly called materialism" in this way:[1]

> "If we analyze the proposition that all mental phenomena are the effects or products of material phenomena, all that it means amounts to this: that whenever those states of consciousness which we call sensation, or emotion, or thought, come into existence, complete investigation will show good reason for the belief that they are preceded by those other phenomena of consciousness to which we give the names of matter and motion. All material changes appear, in the long run, to be modes of motion; but our knowledge of motion is nothing but that of a change in the place and order of our sensations; just as our knowledge of matter is restricted to those feelings of which we assume it to be the cause."

To this

LAST POSTURE OF MATERIALISM

the open secret of Kant is the full reply. It is simply of no consequence to the case what states of consciousness precede or follow what other states of consciousness. Let it be granted (whether true or not) that "phenomena of consciousness to which we give the names of matter and motion" precede all others. What of it? Kant has proved to us that *no* phenomenon of consciousness—no matter, no motion, no sensation—and, beyond all these, no time and no space, in which all the rest appear—has, or can have, *any existence*, except as put into unity, form, and order, by the unity, form, and order of mind. If both "the synthesis of apprehension" and "the synthesis of apperception" enter into any state of consciousness named matter, *to give it birth*, there is no danger of taking the element of intelligence for an *afterbirth* of the process.

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[1] "Hume," page 80.

Here is

THE PIVOT OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY,

on which it all turns. Uproot the pivot who can? It is said that the thought of the world is now returning to Kant. It is strange—a "grim joke," as Carlyle might say—but Herr Professor Kant foresaw what a mess of "cerebration" would follow him, and partly at least by his own fault. He prophesied it. In 1787, closing his "Preface" to the second edition of the "Critique of Pure Reason," he said:

> "To those deserving men, who so happily combine profundity of view with a talent for lucid exposition—a talent which I myself am not conscious of possessing—I leave the task of removing any obscurity which may still adhere to the statement of my doctrines. For, *in this case, the danger is not that of being refuted, but of being misunderstood.*"

This was said a hundred and six years ago. Kant has had many a critic since, in many a country, and his book has dissolved many a head; but his words, true when written, are true to-day. He has never been "refuted"; and while the human mind is a perceptive, a conceptive, and a rational unity, the construction of it will permit no such ambitious feat. The thought of Kant has been extended; and the extension we may cheerfully admit to be correction. His circumference was larger than he supposed; but he centres the circle of modern science and of modern philosophy.

Kant's industry, as we have seen, began with the general acceptance of what, if designated in a national way, would be called British idealism. Mr. Lewes, as biographical historian and coroner of philosophy, tells us that, after Locke, "it was considered established" that we "could have no knowledge not derived from experience," no experience but of "ideas," and consequently that we "could never know things in themselves, but only things as they affect us." While Kant set out to analyze "experience" for the *a priori* mental factor of it, and to dissect "ideas"—to which he gave the better name of "re-presentations" (meaning second-presentations, reflexes, doubles)—he inherited from the Lockists their conception of the ultimate non-ego—the objective background of matter—and never outgrew that conception. Whatever unity and form *we*, as units of mind, may bring to the nature and construction of our objects, the *filling* of them is not innate in us. It has a source apart. It comes from another—say, sensuously, an *out*, though it is only *this* through *re*-presentation in space. But this ultimate non-ego Kant took for granted at his first step, and finally, as against Fichte and others, believed that he demonstrated. He called it the "noumenon," the "real correlate of matter," and pluralized it as "things in themselves." Yet he insisted, just as Herbert Spencer does to-day, that 'tis "unknown and unknowable."

In a certain way—vital enough, too—"things in themselves" *are* "unknown and unknowable." Man is a small, dependent, limited being. Let us admit at once every old proverb in the world, to the effect that "the finite cannot comprehend the infinite." Sir William Hamilton issued a complete list of such proverbs. Let us adopt the whole of it. "The finite cannot comprehend the infinite." The very meaning of "things in themselves" is that they are withheld from us in their *specific contents.* But in their *general nature* they are related and revealed to us; and the revelation is always asserted when we name them "source of impact," the "real correlate of matter," "things in themselves," or even "the unknown and unknowable." Is there an "unknown and unknowable?" Yes, there *is.* But whatever *is* has *being*—*must* have being, or not be that which "is." So much then we *know* of "the unknown and unknowable": it has being; it is a *fact.*[1] But we know it negatively, as well as positively. We know what it is *not*, on precisely the same ground that we know what it *is.* Being a "noumenon," it is *not* a phenomenon; being a "thing in *itself*," it is not what things are to *us.* Being "the real correlate of matter," it is *not* matter, but is the objective background of matter. But Kant had analyzed matter and found it to be a *relation*—a relation between finite subjective awareness and this very noumenal background now in view. He had found, too, that all *matter*—every spicule of it—is

EXHAUSTED IN THE RELATION

—that out of the relation matter has no existence. By these presents, then, we know that the objective background of matter, the ultimate non-ego, is *not material.*

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[1] Even Mr. Spencer sees this quite clearly in criticising Hamilton and Mansel.

But here let us pause and think, for our final step: it is worth our while. When reduced to elements, to principles, what is there of the universe—the all of things? Just the subjective and the objective, mind and matter. Hence, that which is *not matter* is *mind*. Nothing else is left for it.

We may wriggle at this terminus as much as we like, but there is no dodging it. It may be said, for instance, that, while we *know* and *experience* nothing but mind and matter (including with matter its phenomenated vistas, space and time), we can *imagine* something else than either; and, during the past fifty years, this nonsense has found lodgment in many heads. Now I can imagine *anything*, in the meaning that I can arbitrarily produce some foolish *fancy*. I can imagine a white blackbird, with his tail-feathers on his head. But I cannot imagine even this self-evident contradiction as possessing neither mind nor matter. What is an object of imagination? (of fancy?) It may be empty of matter, and so unlike the white blackbird. But *no* object of imagination can be empty of mind. Imagination is itself an act of mind: hence every possible product of imagination must partake of mind. If, therefore, I imagine something apart from mind and matter, it must still spring from mind, contain mind, and so *not* be apart from mind. The "*reductio ad absurdum*" can be had cheap and sure, just where it is most needed.

Reaching the view where noumena, as impossible to matter, are resolved into mind or spirit, it is evident that we have now parted company with the good Professor Kant, though merely by taking a step beyond him which he himself had made inevitable. Very early in his work he had said:

> "There are two sources of human knowledge (which probably spring from *a common, but to us unknown root*), namely, sense and understanding. By the former, objects are *given* to us; by the latter, *thought*."

Dissecting, with Kant, the nature of "understanding," we have discovered in it the unal form of all our re-presentations—of every perceptible and conceivable objected fact. Dissecting "sense," with the same instructor, we have found it to be certain modes of mental susceptibility, its physical organs being nothing but relations between susceptible awareness and the noumenal unknown, like all the rest of "matter." Led, once more, by our Professor straight up to this noumenal unknown, where *he* willed to stop and turn his back on it, we have only had to *look*, in order to see it collapse into the self-retention of Spirit—spirit *out* of *us*, but still *in itself*, as the totality of Spiritual Being. We have thus found the "one common root" of all knowledge and of all things. But we have touched, also, the apex of thought and can now see what is meant—really and fully meant—by

"ABSOLUTE IDEALISM."

Absolute Idealism is not merely a phrase; it is a magnificent fact. Immersed in matter, fooled by our senses, we may insist on looking at all sensuous phenomena, as the Rev. John Jasper looks at the sun, with honest contempt for Copernicus and Newton. "De earf do *not* move roun' de sun," exclaimed the sturdy colored preacher, "but de bressed sun move roun' de earf. Dere she go now: don't I see her wi' dese very eyes?" Parson Jasper does see the sun moving round the earth, and in the same way we all see the objects of our senses existing in perfect independence of ourselves. Still, as surely as astronomy has proved the delusion of taking the sun's movement from the eye, philosophy—and indeed "practical science" itself—has proved the delusion of taking objective re-presentations as not constructed through subjective being. The inevitable end of this proof is the dissolution of noumena as anything "material," and the inclusion of all things in

UNIVERSAL SPIRIT.

Of such spirit, finite subjectivity is a function—a necessary participative reflex, through which the Universal Spirit is life, manifestation, self-evolution. But here we must look back, and waive our final adieu to Kant. Here at last we must take a new guide, named

HEGEL.

But Hegel will never be of much use to mankind until the way to his starting-point is seen through Kant, and seen as clearly as sunlight. When Hegel sat down to write his "Logic," he knew all there was in Kant's idealism, implicit as well as explicit, and took it *literally;* just as Kant, when he sat down to write his "Critique of Pure Reason," knew all the philosophical and scientific idealism that had preceded him, and took the general result of it *literally*. But, as a requisite, perhaps, to his microscopic analysis of human subjectivity, he closed his eyes to all else. He declined to generalize his own discoveries. Hence his trouble with "the antinomies," his non-objectiveness for the "transcendental ideas," and his need of a "moral" ground for intellectual truth. Let us not presume to find fault with this need. If ever an error was high and holy, it was this one. It was the error of a conscience as grand, in a way, as even the master-mind that stands, so far, for the analytic capacity of the human race. But Kant's synthesis was Hegel. As Kant is the inmost centre of modern knowledge, Hegel is as yet the circumference. There has been now and then in the world a man who has dreamed of antagonizing, and even "refuting," Hegel. There has been now and then a man who fancied he could "distil" knowledge out of Hegel, without seeing a spark of light beyond Hume; and there was not long ago one man—a very imposing collector of philosophical *bric-à-brac*—who wondered if Hegel ever really knew what he was about—ever "understood *himself*." When the virtual sons of that genial Scotch bachelor, David Hume, arrive in sight of Kant, it may be of some use for them to begin a consideration of Hegel.

MYSTIC THEOLOGY.

BY DIONYSIUS AREOPAGITA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK BY THOMAS DAVIDSON.

Chapter I.

The Divine Darkness.

§ 1. Trinity Superessential, Superdivine, and Superexcellent, Guide of Christian Theosophy, direct us to the superunknown, supersplendent, and supreme height of mystic oracles, where the simple and absolute and unchanging mysteries of theology are revealed in the superlucent gloom of the Silence that initiates into